

Message Text

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46

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SAB-01 EB-07 AID-05 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /079 W

----- 077024

R 290718Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 823

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY SANAA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

CINCUSNAVEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY

COMIDEASTFOR

USCINCEUR LONDON UK

CONFIDENTIAL MUSCAT 132

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MU, US, XF

USUBJECT: MASIRAH ISLAND; OMAN FOREIGN MINISTRY REACTION

TO PRESS CRITICISM

1. ACTING MINSTATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, YUSUF AL-ALAWI, TOLD
EMBOFFS JANUARY 28 THAT ARAB WORLD PRESS CRITICISM OF PRO-
SPECTIVE ARRANGEMENT FOR OCCASIONAL USE OF MASIRAH ISLAND IS

STILL A HEADACHE FOR OMANGOV. COVERAGE IN LEBANESE PRESS

"WHERE EVERY PAPER IS OWNED BY SOME ARAB GOVERNMENT..."

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IS PARTICULARLY IRKSOME. ALTHOUGH AL-ALAWI HOPEFUL MEDIA

INTEREST IS WANING, HE SAID THAT SOME QUESTIONS ARE STILL BEING RAISED IN WASHINGTON--WHICH IN TURN KEEPS ISSUE ALIVE. HE REPORTED THAT HE HAD CALLED IN LOCAL ARAB AMBASSADOR TO "SET THEM STRAIGHT." IN RESPONSE TO STATEMENT BY ONE THAT US MIGHT USE MASIRAH AS BASE FROM WHICH TO CAPTURE OIL FIELDS, AL-ALAWI REMINDED ASSEMBLED AMBASSADORS THAT OMAN ALSO HAS OIL FIELDS, AND THAT OMANGOV WOULD HARDLY TAKE ACTION WHICH COULD THREATEN HER OWN INTERESTS. INCIDENTALLY, AL-ALAWI STATED THAT FONMIN STILL AWAITING TEXT OF ZAWAWI'S INTERVIEW WITH LONDON TIMES (LONDON 841).

2. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION, BRITISH AMBASSADOR TOLD US THAT, DURING HIS SESSION WITH ARAB AMBASSADORS, AL-ALAWI HAD FLATLY STATED THAT WHATEVER OTHERS THOUGHT NPNON # CONSIDERED U.S. TO BE A GOOD FRIEND. SAME SOURCE SAID QATARI AMBASSADOR WAS THE ONE WHO SPECULATED ABOUT US MILITARY OPERATIONS LAUNCHED AGAINST ARABS FROM MASIRAH, PLOT WHICH HIS JORDANIAN COLLEAGUE REPOSTED THAT "IF THE AMERICANS WANT TO OCCUPY THE OIL FIELDS, THEY DONT NEED MASIRAH..."

3. INCIDENTALLY, SULTAN QABOOS RETURNED MUSCAT JAN. 28 AFTER SEVEN WEEKS ABROAD.
WOLLE

NOTE BY OC/T: #AS RECEIVED

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NNN

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